

The Beaver United Methodist Church will celebrate two momentous anniversaries this year. Not only will the congregation celebrate the 175th anniversary of its first meeting, but they will celebrate the 100th anniversary of meeting in its current location in Beaver, Pennsylvania. The church will celebrate these anniversaries with two months of activities, including plays and music recitals.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the congregation of Beaver United Methodist Church in Beaver, Pennsylvania. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute an enduring institution like Beaver United Methodist Church.

PATIENT NAVIGATOR, OUTREACH AND CHRONIC DISEASE PREVEN- TION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 13, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. BROWN, as well as Mr. DINGELL, the Ranking Member on the Energy and Commerce Committee; Chairman BARTON; Mr. DEAL, the Chairman on the Health Subcommittee; and all of their staff. And I particularly want to thank my good friend and lead cosponsor, DEBORAH PRYCE, and her staff who have been actively engaged in this effort and have been instrumental in getting this bill to the Floor today. And, of course, her own personal experiences and her family's struggle with cancer have made her such a powerful advocate in this regard. This is truly a bipartisan effort and a case study in how—if we choose to work together, across the aisle—we can really make a difference.

And we cannot talk about patient navigators without thanking Drs. Harold Freeman, Elmer Huerta, and Gil Friedell, who have been pioneers in creating patient navigator programs that can be replicated across the country—which is exactly what we're doing today.

There is no question that we have a health care crisis in this country. Not only does the cost of our nation's health care system discourage people from getting the care they need, but the sheer complexity of the system can be so overwhelming that patients don't even know what their treatment options are.

The Patient Navigator bill addresses these issues, as well as other barriers that America's families—just like New Jersey's families—face in getting the health care they need and deserve. The bill encourages prevention and early detection in order to keep the costs of health care down, and provides a patient navigator to help families navigate the complex health care system so that they get the best treatment options available when a family member is diagnosed with cancer or another chronic disease.

It will ensure that all Americans, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, language, or geography, will have access to prevention screening and treatment, and that they will have an advocate at their side, helping them navigate through today's complicated health care system.

For example, a mother who has just been told that she could have breast cancer and needs to see a specialist would benefit from a patient navigator who would help her under-

stand her diagnosis, make sure she follows through and sees the doctor, and identify health coverage options that might be available to help with the cost of her treatment. And, because that mother heard about the importance of getting regular check-ups, hopefully her cancer will be found at a much earlier stage, giving her a much better chance of survival and giving her family a better chance at a long, healthy life together.

The bill addresses what I believe are the root causes of health disparities in minority and underserved communities: that's lack of access to health care, particularly prevention and early detection. The bottom line is: the only way to stay healthy is to see a doctor when you are healthy. Unfortunately, patients in underserved communities are less likely to receive early screening and detection, so their disease is found at a much later stage and they have less chance of survival. That's why we're here today—to give those people the chance they deserve for a long, healthy life.

The Patient Navigator bill does this by replicating the successful models developed by Drs. Freeman, Huerta, and Friedell in a national demonstration project. It focuses on outreach and prevention, through Community Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, Indian Health Clinics, and cancer clinics. And it does so by providing patient navigator services and outreach in health disparity communities to encourage people to get screened early so that they can receive the care they need. Patient navigators educate and empower patients, serving as their advocates in navigating the health care system.

In addition to having visited both Dr. Freeman's program in Harlem and Dr. Huerta's program here in Washington, my constituents in New Jersey and I have seen first-hand the difference patient navigators can make in a community. I was able to secure funding for a one-year demonstration project at a Community Health Center in Jersey City, New Jersey. That program has screened more than 1,400 people and has a caseload of about 300 patients who were identified through these screenings with abnormal findings and are currently benefiting from the help of the patient navigator in finding follow-up care and treatment.

And before I close I want to share one of the most compelling stories I've heard and one of the reasons I've worked so hard to make this program a reality for more Americans. It's the story about Hazel Hailey, one of the patient navigators in New Jersey, and her daughter, Robin Waiters. Robin, who was only 36 years old, suffered severe stomach pains for 2 years and refused to see a doctor, despite her mother's pleas for her to seek medical care. Finally, she had no choice but to go see a doctor. Tragically, 3 months later, Robin died from colorectal cancer. Her mother, Hazel, tells about her daughter's last request—she made her mom promise to tell all her friends, family and everyone she could “that if your body is trying to tell you something, listen to it. You could possibly save your life.” Hazel quotes her daughter as saying, “I am dying because I chose not to get help. Fear set in and I lost out on life.” Hazel is fulfilling her promise to her daughter as a patient navigator, working every day to ensure that what happened to her daughter doesn't happen to other families. And that's why we're here today, to ensure that the Hazels across the country have the tools they need to educate and empower people about the importance of early detection and screening, and to help them navigate the complexities of the

health care system so that they get the treatment and follow-up care they need.

Again, I want to thank my colleague DEBORAH PRYCE for all of her work on this effort, as well as all of those who have worked behind the scenes to make this concept a reality. We have strong bipartisan support for this bill in both the House and Senate, and I am more optimistic than ever before that we can make this program a reality and help families struggling to afford their health care and to understand the complex system in order to get the care they need. There's simply too much at stake if we don't act.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHRIS COLLIER

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Chris Collier on being named the 2005 Lawrence County Entrepreneur of the Year.

Chris is the President of S&S Processing, a company that he established in 1990, which is located in West Pittsburg. Mr. Collier, after acquiring the mining rights to a large plot of land along the Little Beaver River, has turned his company into one of the largest suppliers of specialty soils in the Tri-State area. S&S Processing distributes specialty soils for athletic fields and playgrounds, while also providing custom blended soils, premium top-soils and composts to architects, engineers and contractors.

Mr. Collier will be honored at the 2005 Lawrence County Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Dinner to be held at the New Englander Banquet Center in New Castle, Pennsylvania. Chris was selected as the 2005 winner because he personifies the entrepreneurial spirit that is so prevalent in the Lawrence County Area. Mr. Collier has indeed had a significant impact on the community as a whole and has provided the young people of Lawrence County a rich example of what it takes to be a successful business owner.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Chris Collier. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute citizens such as Chris who add so much to the community in which they live.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall votes numbers 241 and 242. Had I been present, I would have voted:

“Aye” on rollcall number 241, S. 643—A bill to amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 to reauthorize State mediation programs,

“Aye” on rollcall number 242, H.R. 2326—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 614 West Old County Road in Belhaven, North Carolina, as the “Floyd Lupton Post Office.”